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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 047335

FOLLOWING TEL SENT ACTION SECSTATE WASHDC INFO BLANTYRE,
BRASILIA, CONAKARY, DAKAR, DAR ES SALAAM, LONDON, LOURENCO
MARQUES, LUANDA, LUSAKA, MADRID, NATO, DIA, USCINCEUR,
OPORTO, PONTA DELGADA FROM LISBON MARCH 07:

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 0848

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PFOR PO MZ AO

SUBJ: PM CAETANO REPLIES TO SPINOLA IN NATIONAL

ASSEMBLY ADDRESS

REF: (A) LISBON 0807 (B) LISBON 0778

SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER CAETANO DELIVERED SPEECH
MARCH 5 IN WHICH HE ATTACKED IDEAS ASSOCIATED WITH
FEDERAL SOLUTION FOR OVERSEAS PROBLEM ADVANCED BY
GENERAL SPINOLA IN RECENT BOOK. CIRCUMSTANCES
SURROUNDING THE CASE, PLUS THE STUDIED AMBIGUITY
WRITTEN INTO THE SPEECH IN TYPICAL CAETANO STYLE,
LEAVE SPEECH OPEN TO DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS
ACCORDING TO PRECONCEPTIONS OF HIS HEARERS CONCERNING
CAETANO'S LONG-RANGE GOALS. ONE ALTERNATIVE IS THAT
CAETANO GENUINELY MEANT TO REPUDIATE SPINOLA'S VIEWS
AND ADVOCATES A RIGID "STAY PUT" POLICY. ANOTHER IS
THAT HE MEANT TO GIVE THAT APPEARANCE IN ORDER TO
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REDUCE RIGHT-WING PRESSURES AGAINST HIM AND SPINOLA,

WHILE IN FACT WELCOMING SPINOLA'S OPENING OF DEBATE FOR A MORE LIBERAL SOLUTION TO OVERSEAS QUESTION. PRELIMINARY INDICATIONS ARE THAT CAETANO HAS SUCCEEDED IN GAINING SOME TIME BUT HAS NOT PLACATED ULTRARIGHT-- WHO STILL SEEK DEPARTURE SPINOLA. IN ANY CASE, PUBLICATION OF BOOK AND RESPONSE BY PRIME MINISTER HAVE IRREVOCABLY SHAKEN HALLOWED DOCTRINE ON OVERSEAS POLICY. END SUMMARY.

1. PM CAETANO, USING FOR FIRST TIME SINCE 1970 CONSTITUTIONAL PREROGATIVE TO ADDRESS NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON "SUBJECTS OF RECOGNIZED NATONAL INTEREST", DELIVERED MAJOR SPEECH ON OVERSEAS POLICY MARCH 5. ASSEMBLY GALLARIES WERE PACKED; 55-MINUTE SPEECH CARRIED LIVE ON TV AND RADIO, REBROADCAST ON BOTH MEDIA IN PRIME EVENING TIME AND DOMINATED PRESS FOLLOWING DAY. WHILE NEITHER SPINOLA NOR HIS BOOK WAS MENTIONED DIRECTLY, CAETANO DEALT WITH MAJOR POINTS RAISED BY SPINOLA IN HIS BOOK AND, ON THE FACE OF IT, REJECTED THESE IDEAS AS MISGUIDED OR UNWORKABLE APPROACHES TO SOLVING PORTUGAL'S OVERSEAS PROBLEM.

2. EXAMPLES OF SPINOLA POINTS CONTESTED BY CAETANO: SPINOLA HAS ARGUED FOR A FEDERAL SYSTEM IN WHICH METROPOLE WOULD BE JUST ONE OF EQUAL PARTS WITH CENTRAL GOVERNMENT HAVING LIMITED ROLE, POSSESSING

DEMONSTRATED POPULAR SUPPORT THROUGH PLEBISCITES BASED ON ADULT SUFFRAGE WITHOUT LITERACY TESTS, CONSTITUTING GENUINE ACTS OF SELF-DETERMINATION WHICH WOULD GAIN WORLD AND EVEN CONCEIVABLY INSURGENT ACCEPTANCE (LATTER POINT LEAVING OPEN POSSIBILITY OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH INSURGENTS). ALTHOUGH THIS SOLUTION CARRIED RISKS, SPINOLA MAINTAINED, IT ALSO CARRIED PROBABILITY OF CONTINUED AND VOLUNTARY LINKAGE OF TERRITORIES WITH PORTUGAL, WHILE PRESENT "IMMOBILITY" GUARANTEED LOSS OF TERRITORIES SOONER OR LATER AS WELL AS THEIR PORTUGUESE-NESS.

3. THESE POINTS HANDLED BY PM AS FOLLOWS: CAETANO CONTENTED THAT STRONG CENTRAL GOVERNMENT NECESSARY INTER ALIA TO DEFEND WEAKEST
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GROUPS IN SOCIETIES AND TO FIGHT DISCRIMINATION AND SEGREGATION. CAETANO WARNED AGAINST PLEBISCITES, ONE-MAN-ONE VOTE, AND SELF-DETERMINATION BY ASSERTING THAT GREATEST DISSERVICE EUROPE HAD DONE TO AFRICA WAS ATTEMPT TO TRANSFER TO AFRICA EUROPEAN-STYLE DEMOCRACY. DEMOCRACY OF ANGLO-SAXON TYPE RAPIDLY TURNED INTO TOTALITARIANISM. PLEBISCITES INAPPROPRIATE FOR UNDERDEVELOPED AFRICA, WOULD PARODY DEMOCRACY AND WOULD OFFER PORTUGAL'S

ENEMIES OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLOIT INNOCENCE OF AFRICANS. NEGOTIATIONS WITH TERRORISTS TODAY CAN ONLY SOONER OR LATER LEAD TO HANDING OVER TERRITORIES. IN THE FRANCH AND BELGIAN EXPERIENCE AGREEMENTS REACHED WERE EVENTUALLY BROKEN. PORTUGAL'S MILITARY EFFORTS IN OVERSEAS WOULD RESULT IN A WEDGE BEING DRIVEN BETWEEN PORTUGAL AND HER AFRICAN PEOPLES ONLY IF THERE WERE NATIONALIST UPRISINGS IN GUINEA, ANGOLA AND MOZAMBIQUE; THERE ARE NO SUCH UPRISINGS OF THE PEOPLE WHO ARE, ON CONTRARY, INNOCENT VICTIMS OF SUBVERSION FROM OUTSIDE.

4. CAETANO ENDED BY SUBMITTING HIS POLICY FOR ASSEMBLY JUDGEMENT. MOTION WAS THEREUPON INTRODUCED BY ANGOLAN DEPUTY NETO MIRANDA, CHAIRMAN OF OVERSEAS COMMITTEE, WHICH "RESOLVES TO SHOW (ASSEMBLY'S) SUPPORT FOR GOVERNMENT POLICY, WHICH HAS BEEN CLEARLY DEFINED AND SUSTAINED BY PRIME MINISTER, PARTICULARLY INsofar AS DEFENSE AND DEVELOPMENT OF OVERSEAS ARE CONCERNED". DEBATE COMMENCED MARCH 6 AND ALL NINE SPEAKERS TO DATE HAVE SUPPORTED PRIME MINISTER.

5. CAETANO'S STAND APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN TAKEN BY MANY ON THE RIGHT AS A WELCOME REJECTION OF POINTS RAISED BY SPINOLA AND AS CONFIRMATION OF THEIR CONVICTION THAT HE IS DETERMINED TO STAY IN AFRICA AT ALL COSTS DESPITE LIBERAL OVERTONES OF HIS "AUTONOMY" POLICY. WE JUDGE THAT A SIMILAR ASSESSMENT WOULD BE MADE BY MANY ON THE LEFT WHO DERIVE FROM WHAT THEY HEARD IN THE SPEECH CONFIRMATION OF THEIR DISILLUSIONMENT OVER AN AUTONOMY POLICY THEY SAW AS WINDOW-DRESSING.

6. HOWEVER, OTHERS ON THE FAR RIGHT AND LIBERAL CENTER FIND CONFIRMATION IN THE SPEECH OF THEIR FEARS AND HOPES, RESPECTIVELY, THAT CAETANO IS MOVING TOWARD EVENTUAL INDEPENDENCE FOR THE AFRICAN PROVINCES, WITH DUE REGARD

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TO THE TIME IT TAKES TO PREPARE OPINION IN A COUNTRY WHERE CHANGE SHOCKS. BOTH OF THESE GROUPS ASSUME, AS DO MOST OBSERVERS HERE, THAT CAETANO MUST HAVE ACQUIESCED IN THE PUBLICATION OF THE BOOK EVEN IF NOT AGREEING WITH ALL OF ITS DETAILS.

7. FURTHERMORE, BOTH THE FAR-RIGHT AND THE LIBERAL CENTER CAN FIND SOME CONFIRMATION FOR THEIR INTERPRETATION IN THE SPEECH ITSELF. FOR EXAMPLE, WHILE THE BULK OF HIS TREATMENT OF THE SUBJECT OF SELF-DETERMINATION AND PLEBISCITES WAS NEGATIVE, HE INTRODUCED THE SUBJECT BY STATING THAT "ONE COULD ACCEPT, WITHIN THE IDEA OF SPEEDING UP THE POLITICAL EVOLUTION OF OVERSEAS PORTUGAL, THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION OF PEOPLES AND RECOURSE TO A PLEBISCITE OF THE POPULA-

TIONS." IN DEALING WITH NEGOTIATIONS WITH INSURGENTS, HE STATED "WE COULD NOT, FOR EXAMPLE, ACCEPT NEGOTIATION WITH THE ENEMY IN GUINEA IN TERMS WHICH WOULD DEPRIVE US OF THE AUTHORITY TO REFUSE NEGOTIATIONS IN ANGOLA AND MOZAMBIQUE." HE LEFT UNSAID BUT OPEN THE POSSIBILITY THAT TERMS FOR NEGOTIATING IN GUINEA WHICH WOULD NOT HAVE IMPLICATIONS ELSEWHERE MIGHT BE CONCEIVABLE. AT OTHER POINTS, CAETANO SUGGESTED THAT HIS CURRENT POLICY IS NOT INCOMPATIBLE WITH SPINOLA'S RECOMMENDATIONS, AND INDEED IN SOME RESPECTS WENT BEYOND SPINOLA. FOR EXAMPLE, HE QUOTED FROM ONE OF HIS 1969 SPEECHES THAT THE AUTONOMOUS PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURES ARE IN A POSITION NOT INFERIOR "EITHER IN THEIR COMPOSITION OR IN THEIR COMPETENCE, TO THE ASSEMBLIES OF MEMBER STATES OF THE MOST ADVANCED FEDERATIONS."

8. COMMENT: IT IS TOO EARLY TO TELL WHICH INTERPRETATION OF CAETANO'S ACTION IN THIS MATTER IS SOUND. IT IS UNPRECEDENTED IN PORTUGAL THAT A SERVING OFFICER WOULD BE ALLOWED TO PUBLISH A BOOK AT VARIANCE WITH PREVAILING DOGMA. IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT SPINOLA, BEING PORTUGAL'S MOST ILLUSTRIOUS WAR HERO, IS IN AN UNASSAILABLE POSITION AND COULD NOT BE PREVENTED FROM PUBLISHING WITHOUT RISKING A VIOLENT REACTION FROM MILITARY CIRCLES, PARTICULARLY JUNIOR OFFICERS, WHO IDOLIZE HIM. IT WOULD HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY

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DIFFICULT FOR CAETANO TO MOVE AGAINST HIM IF, AS SEEMS LIKELY, CAETANO WAS INDEBTED TO SPINOLA FOR SUPPORT DURING THE REPORTED DECEMBER PLOT. THE ABSENCE OF A REACTION FROM SPINOLA SUGGESTS THAT HE, AT LEAST, DOES NOT CONSIDER THE PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH TO HAVE BEEN A FLAT REBUKE AND A TOTAL REPUDIATION OF HIS VIEWS. IN ANY EVENT, CAETANO DOES APPEAR TO HAVE GAINED SOME BREATHING SPACE FOR PASSIONS TO COOL DOWN AND, WHATEVER HIS DESIRES, THE DEBATE INAUGURATED BY SPINOLA ON PORTUGAL'S OVERSEAS POLICY IS AND WILL REMAIN OPEN.

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